

Rotary International **Rotary and Peace**





"The way to war is a well-paved highway, and the way to peace is still a wilderness."

—Paul Harris



World Understanding

THE QUEST FOR WORLD UNDERSTANDING AND PEACE HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE OF ROTARY SINCE ITS EARLY DAYS.

At the 1921 convention in Edinburgh, Scotland, Rotarians unanimously agreed to incorporate **peacemaking** into Rotary's constitution and bylaws.



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A 1931 goodwill meeting of U.S. and Canadian Rotarians led to the creation of the **first international peace park** — the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in Montana, USA, and Saskatchewan, Canada — to celebrate the world's longest unfortified border.






European Rotarians organized *petits comités* during the 1930s to exchange club visits and promote international understanding. Now called **intercountry committees**, these groups carry out ambitious service projects in Europe and Africa.



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At the 1940 convention in Havana, Cuba,

Rotarians adopted a resolution calling for "freedom, justice, truth, sanctity of the pledged word, and **respect for human rights**" that became the framework for the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



In 1945,

49 Rotary members served  
in 29 delegations to the  
**United Nations Charter  
Conference.**



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Today, Rotary maintains close relationships with many UN agencies. RI's representatives to the UN in New York host an annual **Rotary Day** at the United Nations to celebrate this partnership for peace.







Many RI and Rotary Foundation programs are designed to **promote understanding** among people of different countries and cultures.





Since 1947,  
**Ambassadorial Scholars**  
have spread the Rotary  
message of goodwill to the  
many countries where  
they have studied.



In 1965,  
the **Group Study  
Exchange** program  
began sending teams  
of young professionals  
abroad to share ideas  
with others in their  
field.



**Youth Exchange**, which had begun with a 1927 exchange between the Rotary Club of Copenhagen, Denmark, and American students, became an official RI program in 1974.





And in 2002,  
the **Rotary Centers for  
International Studies**  
admitted the first class of  
70 students committed to  
careers in peacemaking  
and conflict resolution.



Other activities

ROTARY CLUBS AND DISTRICTS ALSO INITIATE AND SUPPORT PEACE EFFORTS.

**Peace Camp '04**, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Muttenz-Wartenberg, Switzerland, brought Israeli and Palestinian young people together to develop friendships and overcome tensions.



The Rotary club-sponsored **Ulster Project** brings Protestant and Catholic teenagers from Northern Ireland to the United States to promote trust, tolerance, and reconciliation.





Rotary's international meetings foster the spirit of **international understanding** when Rotarians of many countries and cultures gather to celebrate service and fellowship.

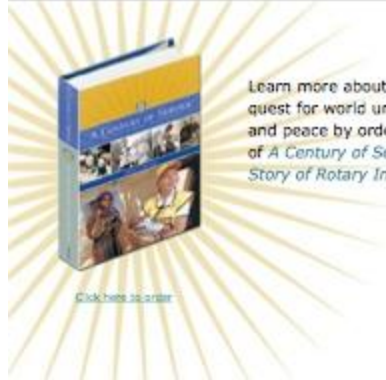






Rotarian peacemaking activities have been further encouraged by the RI Board, which designated February as **World Understanding Month** and 23 February as World Understanding and Peace Day.





Learn more about Rotary's quest for world understanding and peace by ordering a copy of *A Century of Service: The Story of Rotary International*.

[Click here to order](#)